

# OPEN AND SHUT?

Sunday, January 22, 2012

## The Research Works Act: Two more dissenters

Open Access advocate [PeterSuber](#) is maintaining a [page](#) at the [Berkman Center](#) listing publishers and societies who oppose the Research Works Act (RWA), otherwise known as [HR 3699](#).

Two new entries have recently been added to this page concerning societies that dissent from the RWA.

The first entry points to a January 11th post on the [Code for Life](#) blog reporting that a letter about the RWA has been sent to members of the International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB) by ISCB executive officer [BJ Morrison McKay](#).

In the letter Morrison McKay says, "ISCB strongly opposes this bill [RWA]. Burkhard Rost, ISCB President, and Richard Lathrop, ISCB Public Affairs & Policies Committee Chair, are drafting a letter to the bill's authors that expresses our opposition and emphasizes the importance of the [ISCB Public Policy Statement on Open Access to Scientific and Technical Research Literature](#) that was released in 2010."

Morrison McKay's letter also invites members of ISCB who have yet to [sign](#) its OA statement to do so.

The second entry points to a [comment](#) on the [Savage Minds](#) blog reporting that on January 18th the Executive Board of the Society for Cultural Anthropology (SCA) voted UNANIMOUSLY to pass a resolution opposing the RWA.

The resolution begins, "On behalf of the SCA membership, the SCA Executive Board urges the [American Anthropological Association](#) to oppose the Research Works Act (HR 3699) introduced into Congress on December 19, 2011, and to distance itself from the endorsement of this legislation by the Association of American Publishers, of which AAA is a member."

As the resolution indicates, the RWA is [supported](#) by the Association of American Publishers (AAP), which has [described](#) the bill as "significant legislation that will help reinforce America's leadership in scholarly and scientific publishing in the public interest and in the critical peer-review system that safeguards the quality of such research."

Neither the ISCB nor the SCA are themselves [members](#) of the AAP, although, as is evident from the resolution, the AAA is a member.

If passed, the RWA would be a major setback for the Open Access movement, since it would reverse the [Public Access Policy](#) introduced by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2005, a policy that requires all NIH-funded research to be made freely accessible online within 12 months. The bill would also prevent other federal agencies from imposing similar requirements on researchers.

A number of AAP members have already disavowed the RWA, including [MIT Press](#), [ITHAKA](#), [Pennsylvania State University Press](#), [California University Press](#), [Rockefeller University Press](#), [Nature Publishing Group](#), and the non-profit [American Association for the Advancement of Science \(AAAS\)](#), which publishes the journal [Science](#).

Other AAP members have indicated that they prefer to stay neutral (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

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### Tweets by @RickyPo



**Richard Poynder**  
@RickyPo

Open access—is it the way forward?  
[link.springer.com/article/10.100...](http://link.springer.com/article/10.100...)

I certainly do not want to decry the OA model of publishing, if the underlying intent is worthy and totally scientific. As warranted by Dom Mitchell, Operations Manager of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), in an online post on 2 Oct, 2020, almost 63% of 15,259 journals indexed in DOAJ do not levy any article processing charge (APC). However, if economic expediency takes charge, which unfortunately seems to have done lately, with the sudden pandemic of 'Predatory journals', this model seems to be doing more harm than good to the scientific community, and even to the society at large. Here, the role of so-

3h



**Richard Poynder**  
@RickyPo

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**Software** Digital  
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**Medical** OA in Russia  
**Radical** OA Almost OA  
 HEFCE **Frontiers**

In addition, the OA publisher BioMed Central (BMC) has **announced** that it opposes the RWA. And BMC's parent company, Springer has also published a **statement** on the RWA. Like the above two societies, neither BMC nor Springer is a member of the AAP.

Posted by Richard Poynder at [16:31](#)



Labels: [Peter Suber](#), [Research Works Act](#)

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Babu Gedela

\*\*\*Update: On August 26th 2016, the US government (Federal Trade Commission) announced that it has charged OMICS with making false claims, ...



**Robin Osborne** on the state of Open Access: Where are we, what still needs to be done?

One of a series exploring the current state of Open Access ( OA ), the Q&A below is with Robin Osborne , Professor of Ancient History a...



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Broadening the Pool

We are today seeing growing dissatisfaction with the pay-to-publish model for open access. As this requires authors (or their funders or ins...



Open Access:  
What should  
the priorities be  
today?

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the 15<sup>th</sup>  
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(BOAI), the meeting that led  
to the launch of the open  
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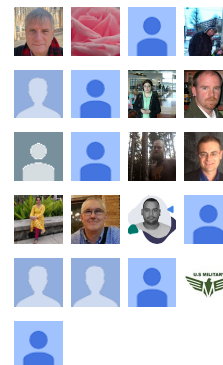
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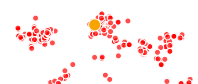
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